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Case studies of homeschool cooperatives in southern New Jersey

Order Number AAT 3103755

Vaughan, Pamela Anne, Ed.D., the Widener University, 2003, 112 pp. Adviser: Wright, Robert.

Homeschooling is a growing alternative to traditional schooling throughout the nation. In the United States, the right of parents to homeschool their children is established in every state. In New Jersey, the number of homeschooled children is accelerating due to fact that there is virtually no regulation of this educational option by public agencies. Thus, there are no guidelines for curriculum, parent-teacher education, or required student testing. Homeschooled students are performing well academically and have been admitted to over 500 colleges across the nation. Educators criticize this practice, arguing that home schooling provides for neither the socialization needs nor the extra curricular experiences offered by the public schools. The development of homeschool cooperatives attempts to address these needs. Homeschool cooperatives provide small group instruction, participation in extra curricular activities and experience learning activities specifically designed for their needs and interests. This study utilized descriptive, qualitative methods and a series of three case studies to examine the following research question as to what the motivating reasons are for homeschooling parents of southern New Jersey to use a homeschool cooperative? This study specifically addresses the following: (1) To determine why parents elected to homeschool and leave public schools; (2) To determine if home school cooperatives were not available, would there continue to be the decision to school in the home; (3) To determine how parents articulate and interact with homeschool cooperatives; (4) Reaction of public school officials to emerging data of the study. Data collection involved a combination of responses from participant interviews with 69 homeschool cooperative parents. Participant observation of the three homeschool cooperative sites, and participation in facilitated parent planning sessions completed the triangulation of data. Conversation interviews with open-ended questions were held with 58 homeschool cooperative students. Evaluation of emerging themes from this data was also discussed for reactions with public school officials. Findings of this study indicated a unique culture of parents, who feel a strong need to control their children's educational and social environments. This educational milieu was comprised of small class sizes and strong oversight by parents that contributed to virtually no disciplinary distractions.

Setting nets on troubled waters: Environment, economics, and autonomy among *nori* cultivating households in a Japanese fishing cooperative

Order Number AAT 3104720

Delaney, Alyne Elizabeth, Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 2003, 280 pp. Adviser: Scaglione, Richard.

Fishing Cooperative Association (FCA) members in Tohoku, Japan cultivate Scaglione Richard *nori* seaweed for the personal autonomy and quality of life this maritime-based occupation provides. However, their fishing territories are severely degraded, their occupational income is unpredictable, and their production expenses remain high. Given such uncertainties, more than 85% of the peak FCA *nori* growers' population made the rational choice (in neoclassical economic terms) to quit *nori* cultivation. The remaining members made the rational choice (in substantivist terms), to continue this way of life in large part because it enables them to "not lower their heads"; and "make decisions themselves". Results are based on 18 months of research in Shichigahama, Miyagi Prefecture, using ethnographic interviews, participant observation, archival research, and demographic survey. All Japanese maritime resources are managed under a common property regime. Therefore, FCA members cannot grow their *nori* elsewhere when their fishing territories become degraded, except by personal agreement with other fisherfolk. Research revealed Shichigahama FCA members do in fact use their social networks to gain access to fishing territories outside of their communities. They rent and barter for access to healthy fishing territories and show a partiality for friendship and horizontal relations over kinship and hierarchical ones. By "helping one another out" with exchanges to fishing ground areas, Japanese fisherfolk are able to continue working on their own, rather than resorting to wage labor and endangering their autonomy. Common property theorists often cite Japan as a useful example for developing common property institutions elsewhere, yet there is little ethnographic information available on the local level fishing cooperatives that actually manage this common property. This case study of a Japanese fishing cooperative and its *nori* cultivators, through its consideration of harmful marine pollution, economic instability, technology change, social networking, and autonomy, is important for understanding the lives of the Japanese who continue this way of life. The adaptability, flexibility, and individual decision-making shown by these men and women are crucial for understanding the management of marine resources at the local level.

The rural cooperative movement and problems of modernizing in tsarist and post-tsarist southern Ukraine (New Russia), 1871–1920

Order Number AAT 3106626

Dillon, Alexander, Ph.D., Harvard University, 2003, 593 pp. Adviser: Szporluk, Roman.

In the history of cooperation in southern Ukraine, a type of activism with a comparatively modest scope became one with aims broad enough to destabilize the social and political order of which it was part. Cooperation evolved from an experiment to solve the problem of the low creditworthiness and buying-power of the grain-producing peasantry, into a vast institutional network that addressed fundamental questions concerning the state-society order and even the national identity of southern Ukraine and its people. Ultimately, cooperation became a building-block of the early Soviet order. The rise of the rural cooperative movement is thus a case study of the intelligentsia's disillusionment with the tsarist regime and its adoption of alternative visions for a post-tsarist order. This study contributes to both the body of scholarship

concerned with the emergence of Ukraine, and that concerned with the degree to which the political vocabulary that was essential to state-building projects on former Imperial Russian territory developed before the fall of the tsar. Such convictions as the wish to build the national economy without private capital, the enlistment of "social forces" in serving the needs of the populace, the rationalization of institutional structures set up to make this enlistment possible, and-ultimately-the incorporation of these structures into an exclusively state-based nation-building project (that of the Soviet regime) appeared at various stages of the cooperative movement's development. Finally, as cooperation in southern Ukraine grew, its leadership were forced to make choices bearing upon the national belonging of their region. They had to choose the linguistic-cultural package that cooperatives were to promote among the peasantry, as well as the geographic extent of the community that was to benefit from what they felt was the area's most precious commodity: peasant-produced grain. Thus, the cooperative movement's development helps us understand why intelligentsia in southern Ukraine found it thinkable that their region was not part of Russia at all, but of Ukraine.